Author of "The Brotherhood of Silence," "The Quality of a Sin," Etc.

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CHAPTER VIL

A WOMAN IN THE QUESTION. ISLE'S horse had not borne him much more than a mile when out of the semidarkness in front of him loomed a figure, also on horseback. At the same

instant the stranger accosted him by uttering a shout which might, in that clear, still air, have been beard at the "Can you tell me if there is a bu-

man habitation near here?" he asked as soon as Lisle, pistol in hand-for strangers were not always friendly in that wild country-rode up to him. "There is one, sir," replied Lisle.

"Are you in trouble?" "I should say so," was the petulant response. "Do you know a ranchman in this region by the name of Craigi

Thompson?" "Yes, sir; very well indeed."

"Is it his house that is near here?" "No. He lives 30 miles away, but my father's house is about a mile distant. Will you go there with me? In he morning I will guide you to Thompson's ranch."

"Thank you, young man. I accept your hospitality most gladly. My daughter will be especially pleased, for she is frightened to death at the prospect of spending the night on the plains, with nothing but the stars for a counterpane."

"Your daughter?" exclaimed Lisle, "Yes, my daughter. I don't wonder that you express surprise at finding two strangers alone at night in such a place as this and one of them a woman. It is all because of her obstinacy. It's woman's mission to get men into trouble. She would come out here today I could not prevall upon ber to wait until we could get a guide. She never rode a borse in her life, so I found and bought an old wagon, which has done nothing but break down ever since we started, and now it has gone beyond repair.

How much more of an explanation he would have volunteered is not known, for at that instant they were both interrupted by a clear voice calling to them out of the darkness, and presently Lisle saw approaching them a figure such as be had never seen before, not even in his most vivid hours of imagining-the slender, willowy. perfectly clad figure of a woman fresh afrom the hands of her modiste. "I could not remain alone in that

horrid place, with all sorts of eyes staring at me out of the darkness," she said as she approached. "Who have you got with you, papa? I hope it is ed their coming. not one of those dirty Indians." "A gentleman, Erna, who has offered

to assist us. This is my daughter, sir-Miss Ernestina Thomas. I am Thomas O. Thomas of Kansas City. May I nsk distance. what your name is?"

Lisle raised his broad brimmed hat from his bead with a courtesy that was instinctive while he replied:

"I am the son of Richard Maxwell, that makes the difference?" who owns this ranch. I am quite sure that my father will welcome you, although it will be the first time that a woman has ever entered our bouse."

"If the night were darker, so that I could not see you, I should say that ! you were a woman yourself," retorted Miss Thomas. "Is your father a woman hater, Mr. Maxwell?"

"I believe so," replied Lisle calmix "Have you not another borse, Mr. Thomas?

'No; I stripped the barness off the only one we had to search for assistance. We left Belmont this morning with the only conveyance that could be procured, and we've been hopelessly lost ever since we started. It comes of permitting a woman to run things for you." "You were nearer Thompson's ranch

when you started than you are now. You have come past it," said Lisle, leaping from his horse. "If your daughter will let me assist her to mount my horse, I will lead the way to my fa-

ther's house. It is not far." "What! Ride on that saddle? Sit

astride, like a man? I guess not! I'll . walk," exclaimed the young lady in dismay. "How far is it?" "More than a mile."

"Well, that won't hurt me. I walk farther than that in one afternoon's shopping at home. But how are we going to take all my things?"

"We will leave them where they are till morning," said Lisle. "They will " not be disturbed. If you are ready, we

"But I can't go a step without some of my things. Can't you put my smallest trunk on your horse?" "I am afraid not. We can wait while

you open it, however, and take out whatever you think is necessary."

"We will not do anything of the kind," interposed Mr. Thomas. "The trunks can stay where they are till morning, and Erna can stay here or come with us, just as she pleases. Start along, Mr. Maxwell, and we'll

follow." Lisle was accustomed to absolute authority on the part of fathers, and he obeyed.

"Come, then," he said, leaping lightly the next ridge, the house will be in view. There is a light in the library, and we will be able to see it. I will ride on, then, and prepare my father for your coming.

Miss Thomas uttered vehement protests against abandoning her "things," but her father was obdurate, and she' had no choice but to follow them. When the crest of the next rise of ground was under their feet, Lisle ants, Miss Thomas," said Maxwell pointed out the light and said that he calmly. "Lisle, will you find Ah Sin would ride on, which he did without in the least heeding the many objections' guests?" raised by the young lady. In truth, he

prospect of receiving a woman into the house, and furthermore he wished an opportunity to consider what his own conduct should be toward her in! juxtaposition with all the prejudice that had been instilled into his mind against her sex. He knew already that he did not like her. She was very different from anything that he had ever seen before, but he remembered that the light in which he had viewed her was very imperfect. He paid no attention to her calls for him to return. The light of the house was in view. That was enough. He had never been taught that it is customary to show women more consideration than men. He supposed that they should be as self reliant as men, and this one, he mentally decided, was a baby, afraid of the dark and doubtless of her own shadow. He had the same contempt for fear of any kind that any man of his training would have had, and he did not consider that a woman was primarily excusable for entertaining it. he did not like her. She was very dif-

did not consider that a woman was primarily excusable for entertaining it. Richard Maxwell was standing on the veranda when he rode up. He knew that Lisle had ridden away in the darkness, and be was watching for his return, but he was not prepared for the announcement that his son bad to make. It astonished perplexed and angered him all at once, but no trace pause. of these emotions expressed themselves as he said calmiv:

"We will make them as welcome as

possible, It did not occur to Lisle to return to the unbidden guests and complete the obligation of an escort, and, having



Heraised his broad brimmed hat. turned his horse into the corral, he took a seat beside his father and await-

"Had you not better retire, Lisle? murmured Richard Maxwell presently when the dark forms of the approaching guests could be discerned in the

"No, sir. I much prefer to remain until these people arrive. I wish to see what a woman of our own kind looks like. Is it the manner of dress

"Dress and training Let r you, Lisle, not to permit your curiosity to express itself to either of our guests. Such conduct would not be gentleman-

"You do not like to have this woman bere, sir?" questioned Lisie. "No. Emphatically I do not."

"I could not do otherwise than to ask them to come." "Certainly not. Their being here, however, need not necessarily bring you in contact with them or with the woman. I will send Jack over to Thompson's with them in the morn-

"I have already promised to go, fa-

"I have other duties for you to perform. It will make no difference who acts as their guide."

The strangers arrived soon after ward. Mr. Thomas came up with out stretched hand, for he had dismounted and was walking beside his daughter. "Your son has been our savior." he

sald cordially. "We should have been obliged to pass the night in the open if he had not found us, and God knows what would have become of my daugh

ter before morning. I have been endeavoring ever since your son mentioned your name to me to recall it. I have succeeded. I think we have had some correspondence in the past, Mr. Maxwell. I am the Thomas of Thomas & Armstrong, Kansas City, Mo.; hides, hoofs and pelts. This is my daughter, Ernestina. I hope that we may not put you to any inconvenience, but I can assure you that your house is a godsend to us now."

"You are welcome, Mr. Thomas. Pleased to meet you, Miss Thomas. I regret that there is not a woman in my establishment; so, if you will permit me, I will show you to your room my self."

"I" you would show me to the dining room, it would be more to the point. am simply famishing. As for going to a sleeping room, I much prefer to remain here for a little while. The night is heavenly now that I am not dying with fright," said Miss Thomas rapidly. She disposed herself in one of the big easy chairs and continued, almost into the saddle. "When we have risen without pause: "It is strange that you haven't a woman about you. How do you do your cooking and mending? Who makes the beds and-and does other things that a woman ought to do for you? Your son says that you are a woman hater. I don't think there is any sense in that. Oh, dear! I'm completely done up by the terrible expe-

riences we have had today." "We are provided with efficient serv and tell him to prepare supper for our

"A Chinese cook!" cried Miss Thornwas filled with dismay concerning what as. "How lovely! Is he chambermaid

cellent servants and that they are really preferred to women in lots of places. Papa never took me with him on one of his trips before, but 1 just wouldn't let him go without me this time. An hour ago I would have given the world to be back again in Kansas City, and now I wouldn't be anywhere else than here if I could. What a pleasant room this one is?" rising and passing unceremonlously through the open window. "This is the library? Your son mentioned it to us, but I did not suppose that anybody had such a thing as a real library in this region." Papa never took me with him on one a real library in this region."

a real library in this region."

She began an inspection of the bookshelves, which she continued with verbal approvement of the bindings until her eyes rested upon the piano.

"Well, I never." she declared vehemently. Then, raising her voice, she called out, "Who plays upon this—the Chinese cook?"

"No," responded a quiet voice directly behind her, "My father and I play upon it."

upon it."

"One would think that you never saw a woman before!" she exclaimed. "I never did," was the quiet reply. "What?"

Miss Thomas forgot her confusion and her anger at the same instant. "What did you say? Say it again, please," she exclaimed after a short

"You are the first woman that I ever saw, Miss Thomas," said Lisle in the same quiet tone. He was perfectly self contained. He regarded the beautiful creature before him with exactly the same emotions that he would have felt if he had been standing before a cage in a menagerie, viewing some rare specimen of capture from equatorial Africa. He was studying her physique without approval, mentally rejoiced that his own in no way resembled it. That slender waist, which he might have spanned with his fingers, found no likeness in his own. That swelling bust, prominent beneath the tight fitting tailor made waist, appeared to blu like a deformity. The tightly drawn skirt of brown cashmere seemed to him as though it would be a deeided impediment to walking, and he realized at once why its wearer had seclined to mount his horse. Her hair filled him with wonder. She had thrown aside her bat, and he saw upon her head the most remarkable spectacle he had ever witnessed. Miss Thomas was justly proud of her hair. She had often been accused of bleaching it, but she had the satisfaction of knowing that it was not only natural, but

to its full length it would have reached to the ground, as indeed it would, or very nearly so. He thought it must be very heavy to carry around, and he wondered if she slept with it that way. While he studied her the anger in her face died out altogether and gave

that its tint could not be counterfeited

by all the chemicals in the world, and

Lisle studied it in amazement. He be-

Heved that if it were permitted to fall

place to an expression of genuine amusement. "This is the first time," she said presently, "the very first time, in all my life that I ever posed as a curiosity. I rather like it. Go on. I am sorry that I did not think to provide myself with a catalogue. Perhaps, though, I can assist you verbally. What are you looking at now-my boots? They're twos, manufactured by Smith & Brown, Main greet, Kansas City; quality, of the finest; shape, the latest; style, unexceptional; finish, superb; handsome and warranted; price, \$7.50. What now? Look at them closely: I wear fives. My, how cold your hands are! They're like ice. See how warm mine are. Oh. the rings! Did you think they were

corns? They slip off and on-so. One of them-this one-is an engagement ring, but I shan't marry the man who put it there. How old are you, Mr. Maxwell-more than 7?"

"I am 18." Lisle still kept his eyes fixed upon her, changing his gaze from point to point in search of new surprises and further marvels. He was mentally comparing her to himself, and be thought that there were many points of similarity which he had not at first discovered; also that they were decidedly unlike. To him she was a human

"Are you really?" she exclaimed. should have said that you were much



Hor figure was what any man would have pronounced bewitching. younger. I am 18, too; but, then, you are only a boy. That accounts for the difference. Boys don't amount to

much." "I have been taught that women do not," replied Lisle gravely.

"That comes of having a woman hater for a father. It's awfully stupid of him. It will be all the worse for you when you find out what women really are. They'll lead you a dance. Oh, how I would like to have you in Kanhis father would say in view of the too? I have heard that they are ex- sas City! Shall I turn around? Would

THE BE NOT DECEIVED THE

To the COLORED PEOPLE OF AMERICA. KING OF ALL HAIR TONICS.



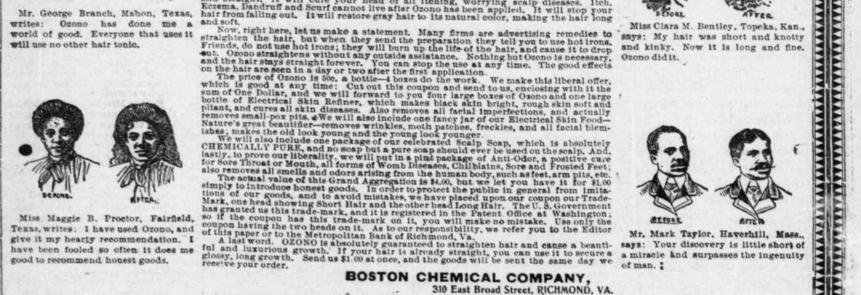
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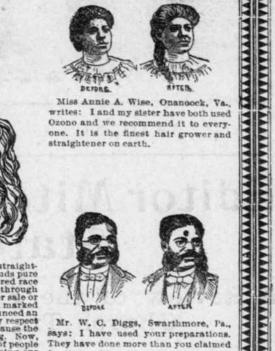


Mr. George Branch, Mahon, Texas,

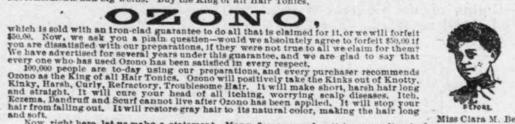




Recognizing the fact that there are wany SO-CALLED hair-growers and hair-straighteners now on the market, and knowing to a certainty that many of these are frauds pure and simple, we wish to make a straight-forward, honest statement to the colored race through this great paper. In the year 1871 our late secretary, Mrs. S. M. Moore, through a fortunate circumstance, acquired the receipt for OZONO. It was not offered for sale or purchased to any extent until 1875, when it was put upon the market and met with marked success. After a thorough test by the colored people of that time it was pronounced an honest, legitimate remedy, true to all thet was claimed for it, and worthy in every respect of the confidence of every member of the colored race, because they found it to cause the hair to grow long and straight, soft and fine, and as beautiful as an April morning. Now, whenever a genuine article appears upon the market there are always a number of people who imitate and make capital out of the merits of other people's goods. Seeing our marked success, numerous firms have entered the market, offering hair-growers and hair-straighteners, many of which are worthless, causting the hair to fail out and doing great damage to the hair and scalp, and the colored people are buying these spurious compounds, which are filled with animal fats, and do the hair more harm than good. To these let us sound a warning—be careful what you use on your hair. Do not be deceived by flaring advertisements and big words. Buy the King of all Hair Tonics,



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that you can see what your Ozono has

you like to study my back?"

"If you please,"

"Well, I never! There, how do you like that?" Her figure, though slight, was what any man would have pronounced bewitching, but it did not so impress

Lisle Maxwell. "I do not think that I like it," he said reflectively.

She wheeled around with a suddenness that startled him, but she only stared. For once she had not words! with which to express her sentiments. "Do you wear a wooden jacket be neath this one?" asked Lisle, touching

her waist gingerly with the end of one

of his fingers. She burst out laughing then-just a low, rippling laugh that was full of melody and so replete with amusement platter ready for the cook, and fruit that Lisle smiled back at her. "Upon my word, you are original!"

she said at last. "No; the jacket, as the rate of about four a year, and pre you call it-and it isn't at all a bad sented them to her friends for their name for it-that I wear underneath dining-room walls. She had just comthis one is not made of wood. I don't pleted a twin pair for a bride. One wonder that you ask, though. Did you represented a mess of lobsters in a never hear of corsets?" "Never. What are they?"

"They are instruments of torture which every woman is condemned to wear. I don't know why unless it is because our Mother Eve once stole an apple and ate it. You've heard about that, haven't you?"

"Instruments of torture," murmured said: Lisle seriously. "You do not seem to suffer." "Oh, we get used to them. If you,

had been nice to me out there in the dark and had brought my trunk here on your horse, I could have shown you a pair. They are mostly made of steel." "Steel! They must be bullet proof, then." "Well, I am not so sure about that.

and I haven't any curiosity on the point. Have you quite finished studying me, do you think? Are you satis-"I ought to be, but I am not. Have

I offended you? If so, I beg your par-"Offended me? Not a bit. You're too original to give offense. I'll make

papa stay over tomorrow, and you can study me to your heart's content. Will that please you?" "Yes. I wish that I might see you without"- He paused irresolutely. "Well, go on. Without what?"

"My Lord!" she gasped. Her face became crimson and then white with:

"Without your instruments of tor-

anger. She turned haughtlly away, and the next instant disappeared through the window.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Boy Art Critic. Wise men say there is nothing really new in this world, and perhaps the boy who passed the following crittoism upon the drawing abilities of his ist; but, anyway, his verdict amused the sister so much that she tells it occasionally, though the joke is on her self. The young woman has a fondness for executing those works of art which consist in the representation of you full o' buckshot." dead game birds hanging by their heels from a nail on a board, fish on a grouped on a table around a wine class. These gems she turned off at peaches, with down on them like

"Sis, you're a peach on lobsters, but you're a lobster on peaches."-Chi-

Identification by Eyeballs, It has been suggested that the

markings on eyeballs are a good means of identification. Some of them are prominent, especially on the upper half of the eye-that is, behind the top lid. Their course is generally zigzag, branching off at sharp angles similar to the lines seen in pictures of lightning. No two eyes are to be found in which the markings are iden tical; hence the means of distinguishing one person from another. After carefully registering the markings on certain eyes, some of which are illus trated, it is found that such mark ings are not, as might have been sup posed, subject to any radical change Now it is obvious that, by the aid of photography and various other means, we may make such copies of a person's eyes as would prove a certain and reliable guide to identification at any later date.-Chicago Trib

Didn't Want to Be Forgiven. "I'll admit that I opposed your very glad to see here marriage, my children," said Silas Mrs. Gilson—But is Fodder, "but now that you're hitched up I'll forgive you."

The groom straightened up and

"I don't see where you come in in this forgivin' bizness," he answered "As you say, you done your level best big sister was an unconscious plagiar- to keep us from gettin' spliced, an' it seems that I ort to be the one to do the forgivin', which I ain't a-goin' to do. Me an' Mandy's goin' to move over in Jasper township, an' if I ever to Keep a Good Man Down." ketch you aroun' the place I'll fill

> And taking Mandy's lily white hand in his own large brown one, ha strode across the threshold .- Baltimore World

An Island of Cranes

Away off in Minnesota, at that popular summer resort, Lake Minnetonka, there is a picturesque island which takes its name from the fact that it is nest of salad; the other a basket of uninhabited by man and given over to the cranes. Generations back these plush. She was so pleased with both | birds decided upon this spot for a sumthat she asked her brother if he did mer resort. As time went on and the not think they were just splendid. It surrounding islands populated, no man was evident that the youthful critic had the heart to disturb them, until liked one and not the other. After now Crane island is pointed out from looking at them a minute or two he passing boats as one of the curiosities of the northwest .- Albany Argus.

> "Vaccination Day." Edith, of Boston, came home from kindergarten in a state of excitement. "Oh, mamma," she exclaimed, "we

don't have to go to school to-morrow!" "Why not?" asked mamma, smiling. "Because teacher says it's Vaccina tion day, when Bridget left Boston." Mamma thought a moment, and then remembered that the next day was the anniversary of Evacuation day, when the British left Boston .-Cincinnati Enquirer.

The "Fastening Penny" in China. When you engage a servant or make a bargain in China it is not considered binding until the "fastening penny" has been paid. Although his bad faith is notorious in some matters, yet to do him justice, when once this coin has been paid by you the Chinaman, coolie or shopman, will generally stick to his bargain, even if the result to him be loss .-Pittsburgh Dispatch.

A Welcome Visitor. Mrs. Wilson-Mrs. Chatterton called

on me yesterday afternoon. I was

Mrs. Gilson-But isn't she an awful scandel-monger? "Yes, that's just it. It was a stupid. rainy day, and you don't know what put a No. 9 boot down hard on the a lot of interesting tales she told me."-Somerville (Mass.) Journal.

> Sensational Preacher. Petience-Is your preacher sensa-

Patrice-I should say so! Why, he preached a sermon last Sunday, and he took for his subjects "It's Hard "Well?"

"Oh, it was all about Jonah and the whale."- Yonkers Statesman.

A Familiar Illustration "Papa, what is a king?" "A king, my child, is a person whose

authority is practically unlimited, whose word is law and whom everybody must obey." "Papa, is mamma a king?"-Pitteburgh Bulletin.

Cash Better Than Credit. It is all well enough to give credit where credit is due but it is beter still to pay cash.—Chicago Daily News.

The Flirt and Her Fan. It is a cold day when the firt has no use for a fan.-Chicago Daily News.

Is Punishment Beneficial?

This question was asked of a large number of persons: What punish ments or sewards have you ever had that did you good or harm? The majority claimed to be benefited by punishment. The boys thought the effects of a good plain talk were salutary, and none had complaint to make against a good "dressing down." Many were grateful for having had a punishment in due season. There is a time in many a boy's life when he thinks he is lord of everything, and it would seem that a good whipping is often the best way to cure this defect. Tenderness is excellent for most children, but there are certain natures on whom it is wasted, because they simply abuse it. Conscience does not seem to be very pow erful in children before the age of nine, Preaching or advice unsought

for does not seem to do much good, while suggestion does. As to the influence of companions, it was greatest between the ages of ten and fifteen. This influence is next to that of home. - Everybody's Magazine.